

## TERMS.

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## THE MANIAC'S CONFESSION.

A few years ago I visited an insane asylum. The woman in charge conducted us through various apartments, giving us all the information in regard to the occupants she was able, and kindly answering all the questions, until we came to a room where one of the patients had lately died, and now lay awaiting the disposal of her friends, who had been apprised of her decease. We entered and gazed reverently upon the face of the sleeper. She was a woman in the prime of life and bore traces of great beauty. What great sorrow had bereft this beautiful creature of her reason, and by what relative, and for what motive, had she been incarcerated in this living tomb? were queries which were in my mind as I gazed upon her lifeless remains.

My eyes involuntarily wandered over the apartment. A little table stood in the corner, beneath the great window. A Bible lay upon it, and as I took it up a paper slid from between the leaves and fell at my feet. I raised it. It was a closely written sheet, and a glance convinced me that it was some sort of a revelation which had been written there during the last hours of the life that had fled.

"What is this?" I asked, as I held up the paper.

"Oh, that is probably some of Aggy's scribbling. She used to call for pen and paper, and she would write over several sheets, and then destroy them. That is probably one of them—of no consequence, I presume," said the woman.

I asked if I might retain it.

"Why yes, if you wish to," she replied.

I hid it away in my bosom, and we soon left the premises.

"What could you possibly want of that crazy woman's scribbling?" my companion asked, as we left the building.

"I fancy there is something here worth preserving," I replied. "Let us examine it."

As we rode homeward, I read it aloud to my friend. It was written in a trembling hand, and read as follows:

"I was the only idolized daughter of wealthy parents. I possessed a haughty and imperious temper, which was never subdued or restrained. My parents were not religious, and no care was taken to impress upon my mind religious truths. Consequently I grew up unprincipled and extremely passionate. While every pains was taken with my education and accomplishments, my heart was left to run wild overgrown and choked by the briars and thorns of selfishness and love of tyranny; yet I was passionately attached to my friends; and as long as they did not cross my imperious will I got on nicely with them."

"Thus I grew to womanhood. Chance threw me into the society of a young lawyer of distinguished abilities, who had begun what was predicted to be a brilliant career. I soon learned to love him with all the depth of my passionate and impulsive nature; and wild with joy, when one day he came to me, and in eloquent language told me how long and devotedly he had loved me, and asked me to be his wife."

"We were married." If I occasionally felt a twinge of disgust of my own qualification for a wife, I soon silenced it with the argument that my love was strong enough to make up for all deficiencies.

"My husband was all that was good and noble, and generous. I was often passionate and unreasonable. But he would take me to his bosom, kiss me so tenderly, and say so gently, 'You must subdue this unhappy temper, Aggy. It is making you miserable.'"

"Then when he was gone I would fly to my chamber, lock the door, and give myself up to an uncontrollable fit of weeping for very shame."

"We had been married about a year. One evening (would to God I could blot from the record of time that fatal night; but it lives like a hissing fiery serpent in memory, and has doomed me to utter despair in this world, and I fear the next!) my husband did not return at the usual hour. I watched long at my accustomed place, at the parlor window. His slippers and dressing gown were warming by the grate and everything was in readiness for him; but he did not come. Twilight deepened into darkness, and I began to grow uneasy. All my selfish feelings were roused, and I felt myself sorely grieved. An hour more, yet he came not. I paced up and down the floor in a fit of impatience. A ring at the door, I waited to hear his step upon the stairs; but it was a lighter step than his, accompanied by the rustling of silk. Nellie B—, an intimate friend bounded in. She was dressed for the opera. She said their carriage waited at the door for myself and Ernest."

I told her Ernest had not yet returned from his office, and I could not go. She looked disappointed. A sudden thought seized me. Would it not be capital revenge for his neglect for me to find the parlor deserted when he came? I went to

the opera. We were scarcely seated in our box opposite. The blood rushed back to my heart, and my pulse stood still as I recognized Ernest, my Ernest, my husband, and leaning upon his arm one of the most beautiful young creatures my eyes ever beheld. This was my first impression, for there quickly followed so deadly and jealous hearted as made her look positively ugly, I quickly drew down my veil that my husband might not discover me, and from my concealment, I watched him with glaring eyes. I heard nothing, saw nothing else; and once when rallied by my companions, I replied that I was not well, and begged to be left to myself.

"Then with the fierceness of a tiger fearful of losing his prey, I turned my eyes towards my husband, and his 'guilty paramour.' She seemed to be enjoying the performance intensely, but she seemed to see nothing but her. His head was bowed towards her, and she would occasionally lift her eyes to his face. Then I saw him smile (just as he had smiled upon me a thousand times,) while he bent still lower over with renewed devotion."

"Each moment was like a red hot dagger piercing my heart. I knew not what demon possessed me; I think I must have been mad when I vowed a terrible revenge. 'Twere better, I reasoned that he should die while yet there existed in his heart a spark of love for me, than to see him little by little drawn away by the syren, till perhaps I should be utterly deserted, and left with all my blind love eating away my heart strings like a consuming fire."

"At my request we left the opera at an early hour, and with a terrible purpose I entered my home. But what was that home now to me? The love that had brightened it was no longer mine. Some demon furnished me with resolution to execute my desperate purpose."

"It had been our custom sometimes to drink a glass of sweet wine of an evening when we were alone. I drew the table to the fire, placed the decanter and glasses. Then with trembling hands I brought a deadly opiate, the nature of which I well knew. The first effect it produces was a deep sleep, which in a few hours terminated in the still sleep of death. I filled the glasses, and into one I dropped the drug. All was done with rapidity, lest my resolution should fail me."

"When all was ready I paced up and down the room, nursing the fire which raged within my bosom, by recounting to myself the wrong I had suffered. I pictured to myself my idolized husband lying still and cold before me, and I felt into a passionate fit of weeping. Then I drew another picture. I saw him drawn from me, giving his love to another. I thought of all the agony I had suffered that night, and imagined how much deeper would be my wrong if I spared him. At that moment I heard his night key it the latch, and he soon entered the room. I stood in the recess of the window, where he did not at once observe me. The wine first attracted his attention, the fatal glass. I saw him lift it to his lips, drain its contents, and I felt fainting to the floor."

"I knew no more for several hours.—When I rallied I was lying upon the sofa; the lamp was burning dimly—an easy chair was wheeled to my side, and in it I saw the form of my husband. I sprang quickly up. The drug was doing its work. He was in a heavy slumber, and already his breath came thicker and shorter, and his pulse beat but faintly."

"My anger had passed away, and all the wild worshipping love which I had cherished towards my husband came rushing back upon my heart. I clasped his hands I kissed his lips, I strove to rouse him, but all in vain. Again I paced up and down the floor, but oh! what different emotions possessed me now."

"A little folded paper, which I had not before noticed, and lying upon the table, caught my eye. Scarcely knowing or caring what I did, I took it up and opened it. I saw that it was the hand-writing of my husband, and I eagerly read its contents. Great God of Heaven! What had I done? It was a note that Ernest had sent me, which did not arrive till after I had gone out. It ran as follows:

"Excuse me, Aggy dear, from coming home to tea. My sister, of whom I spoke to you this morning, has come home and has sent for me to come to her. If she is not too weary, I will take you both to the opera this evening, and will call for you at eight o'clock."

Your loving HUSBAND.

"Now, for the first time, I remembered that he had told me in the morning that an only sister of his, who had been absent several years, was expected home that day. His parents resided in another part of the city. 'He could call for me at eight.' I had gone out earlier, and probably by some carelessness of the carrier, the note had not arrived before the time. I afterwards learned that he did call for me, and being told that I had gone to the opera with some friends, and probably had not received his note, he proceeded to the place with his sister, hoping to find me there."

"A wild hope that he might be yet roused seized me, and I sprang to his side. But alas! too late! He had ceased to breathe."

"Oh! heaven of heavens! what evil had my blind passionate temper wrought me and mine. Again I became insensible."

"I opened my eyes. Loving, tear-stained faces bent over me. A soft hand was gently stroking my temples, and I gazed into the face of that gentle sister, whom I had never seen save upon that fatal night. She kissed me and whispered:

"Dear Aggy, you are the greatest sufferer of us all."

"I was told that I was found in the morning by the servant, lying upon the floor insensible, and my husband reclining in his chair, dead!"

"It seemed that suspicion had not rest-

ed upon myself. The coroner was called and his verdict was, 'Died by visitation of God.'

"Heaven only knows how I loathed and hated myself. I longed to confess the truth, but for the sake of others forbore to reveal that which would have brought upon the family deep disgrace and additional grief. A long illness followed, and my reason reeled. I was carried back to my parents. I could not remain in the house which had been the scene of my sin and punishment."

"Years passed; I grew no better, but was still troubling upon the verge of insanity, yet retaining sufficient reason to distinctly remember my sorrow, and to understand what was passing around me. What was perhaps strange, I was conscious of my mental condition."

"Years passed and my parents both died. I was placed in the care of an uncle, who was my only natural guardian. From him I had inherited the selfish passion which had been my ruin."

"For a time I lived in his house, but he found me too great a trouble, and under pretence of solicitude for my recovery he placed me in the insane asylum. I knew that it was only to get me out of his way that he might have no hindrance in possessing himself of my large fortune.—But I did not object. I felt I deserved it all."

"Twelve years have I spent in this retreat, every one has been extremely kind to me. During that time I have never seen my uncle. It is almost over. I feel that I shall soon follow to that dark bourne where in my frenzy I sent my noble husband nearly twenty years ago. I have read the Bible—I have tried to pray."

"A few months since I visited—Cemetery. I found their graves. A costly monument marks the spot. The uncle is living in possession of his niece's wealth and is seemingly prosperous. I have never made known to any one the existence of the paper in my possession. I have learned that the family of Earnest are all dead."

"The dear friend who shared with me the knowledge of Aggy's confession also lies 'beneath the sod of the valley.'"

"Hoping that it may serve as a warning to some who may read it, I give this history to the world."

## NORMA'S BRIDAL.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

The golden lamps are all aglow,  
Beneath a palace roof sublime—  
Wild tides of music ebb and flow,  
And break on shores of love's soft rhyme—  
(Oh, kingly was the lavish price  
That decked these glorious festive halls!  
And the high genius deified

That hung such wonders on the walls!  
Dreame of the old mysterious East  
Glowed here in depths of sunset light;  
And here an Indian marriage feast  
Made the dim chamber grand at night;  
The Crusade, and the Tournament—  
The hero worship of the past—  
And the fierce winds of Navies bent  
Before the rushing thunder-blaze—  
Or there, in Italy's summer space,  
Night, with her thousand splendid stars,  
Gleamed on a meek Madonna's face  
Betwixt a convent's gloomy bars—  
Or here, in tender passion stirred,  
Pale-fronted Gods, and Nymphs divine,  
Dilated with ideal life.

As crystal cups o'erflow with wine,  
The poet's soul o'erflows the theme  
The artist wrought upon the wall—  
And radiant as that artist's dream  
The starry lamp-light gilded all!  
Proud fancies are flitting to and fro  
'Tis a world of lights and glooms,  
So as the drifting, moonlight snow,  
They move about the gorgeous rooms;  
And, amidst the revelry,  
Proud Duchess Norma, where art thou?  
The mantling beakers blush for thee!  
The bride veil is on thy brow!  
Grand as thy dual coronet,  
Do Beauty wait thee at the door—  
"Oh! Norma, can thy heart forget  
The wild, sweet tales of Conismore?"

The haunting music of that tone  
Rings through her madly throbbing brain.  
But with an inward, stifled moan,  
She leads the glittering bridal-train.  
With sweet blue eyes, and curls of gold  
That flash like sunlight in their fall,  
The proudly beautiful—the cold—  
Guy Percy leans against the wall.  
To his pale forehead climbs a flush—  
As the drifting, moonlight snow—  
He sees the splendid pageant and hush  
O'er the wild falls of Conismore.

The sunny years in beauty rolled,  
Till of the summer times a score  
Had touched his wandering curls with gold;  
And on her girlhood bloom and worn,  
Had stamped their bloom and fire, and wound  
The midnight blackness of the storm  
Amid her tresses, all unbound.  
Ah, Duchess Norma! thou mayest wear  
The undimmed roses of thy youth—  
The burning jewels in thy hair  
Cannot recall thy broken truth!  
One backward yearning glance she flung  
Of ruined love and sated pride—  
But he, the beautiful and young,  
Turned coldly from that perjured bride.

And years have died since they so wildly parted,  
He the devoted, and she the broken hearted.  
The poet's deathless laurels wreath his brow,  
His bridal-crown is dust and ashes now!

PREPARING TO RESIST.—An English officer direct from Paraguay, it is stated in the N. Y. Tribune, reports that Lopez is preparing effective modes of resistance and defense by building fortifications and obstructing the navigation of the river against the approach of the American squadron. He has placed chains and booms across, and proposes sinking light vessels in the channel, in which event our expedition could not ascend. Several Belgian and Hungarian officers are engaged in directing operations.

The past is but an emptied flask;  
The rich future a bottle yet unopened.

## SIX TO ONE; Or The Ranchero's Mistake.

A tale of the Rio Grande.

BY H. CLINTON HAMILTON.

Our scene is laid on the banks of that magnificent western river, the Rio Grande, on the Mexican side, and about forty miles above Point Isabel. Its date is a few years after Texas had declared her independence, and but a brief period—a few months—after a certain peculiar invention, made known in the sequel, had been regularly entered in the Patent Office at Washington by an ingenious Yankee.

About two miles from the river, and situated on the road leading to Matamoros, was a long low-built rancho, surrounded with its picket-fence and out huts, and such accommodations as a traveling public would be likely to need. It was divided and subdivided into numerous apartments, formed by thin board partitions, the largest, however, and that to which the entrance door led, being devoted to a drinking and smoking room, similar to a hotel bar.

It was early evening, and this room was pretty well filled with a lot of rough looking Mexicans, of various vocations and callings. Some appeared to be mule drivers, from their skull caps, and loose check shirts; others loungers and lazarrillo while five were dressed in yellow skirts with blue bodies, closely buttoned to the throat, and a belt in which was plainly revealed a long dirk knife and a pistol.

There was another who demands special attention. He was a tall, square built man, with a light Creole complexion—ranging between the Spanish and the Mexican—with handsome features, relieved by a haughty *distingue* air. He was dressed in a blue jacket, artistically ornamented with a half sling or mantle, which descended but a little below the waist, and concealed the weapons which glittered in his polished belt beneath. He wore trunks of the same hue and material, which descended only to the top of his russet boots. A white ruffled shirt was visible between his open jacket, and a spotted broad collar extended over the blue cloak. A short sabre hung at his left side, with a diamond setting in the hilt. A range of dark curls was visible below his dark sombrero, which was adorned with a long ostrich plume. His air was a mixture of the refined gentleman and desperate adventurer, while his dress, barring his weapons, was that of a Spanish coxcomb in the days of chivalry.

"Well, Mariani," he said, as he threw himself carelessly in a chair by a small table, and addressed a blooming, voluptuous, and bright-eyed Mexican girl behind the bar, "give us a bottle of *Cadiz Estragana*, and a pack of your best cigarettes!" Then turning to the five banditti looking men, who were lounging upon a bench, he added; "Order your liking, my boys, my purse is full to night!"

"*Gracia Capitano!*" exclaimed the men, in a boisterous manner, and they proceeded to call for their respective drinks. The signora behind the bar possessed the endowment of two large black, liquid eyes, and a voluptuousness of form, which seemed to gain high favor with the knightly leader of the ranchoeros—as the five men evidently were—and when she brought forth the wine, met her with a smile of approval, and encircled her waist with his arm.

"Now, by St. Mark!" he exclaimed, "I have not seen so pretty a face since the last time I visited old Borgo's rancho! I fear I shall have to make war against old Borgo, and carry you off as a prize, Mariani!"

The men laughed and huzzed at their master's wit like very slaves; but the black eyes of the young girl seemed to melt in liquid fervor, and the blood mounted to her cheeks as she replied:

"Perhaps it may be unnecessary, señor."

"Indeed!" he replied. "Well, I believe Mariani, you always did look with favor on me, but it is the fate of all gay cavaliers like myself, to have all the fair damsels of a kingdom in love with them.—However, I shall keep you in my mind, and you may pay a visit to Captain Mariani's house before you think of it. There now, one kiss."

The young girl gave it with a flushed cheek, and her eyes sparkled, as she returned to her station behind the bar, to attend to the other customers.

"Now, boys, a health to our next job, and success in the capture of the Matamoros mails to night!" said the leader, as he raised his glass.

The five others drank, with a boisterous cheer.

"Mariani, distribute a glass round among the bourgeoisie; they look as though they were dry as the head waters of Del Norte," exclaimed the ranchoero.

"Bravo!" exclaimed the loungers all round the room, as they rushed forward with an eagerness which portended they had not owned a doubloon during their mundane existence. After they had drank, one of them, who seemed to be a familiar in the rancho, and was somewhat better attired from the rest, turned to the ranchoero, and said:

"Thanks, capitano! there's not a man in Mexico I would sooner drink with than you, not even Santa Anna—himself—though I once had the honor of drinking with him. It was the night after the battle of San Jacinto; he took refuge in my house, and we had a toast together."

"Curse him? He ought to have lost his other leg there, and never got from the field!" exclaimed the ranchoero. "He's the most arrant coward that ever led an army, and as equal a bravo. But we will not talk of him now. What is the news abroad, good Armenda?"

"Nothing of importance," replied the bourgeoisie, "unless it be the new proclamation which I suppose you have heard."

"Not that I am aware of; what is it?" asked the ranchoero.

"Look there!" said the other, pointing to a placard posted against the side of the room. It was printed in Spanish, and dated City of Mexico. It read as follows:

"Whereas, the authorities of the Republic of Mexico have been informed, that the southern borders of Mexico, and the settlements of the Rio Grande, have for a long time been infested by a band of ranchoeros, led on by one senior Jose Dilgaro Morian, notorious for his bold outrages and highway robbery;—therefore: I do hereby offer the sum of five hundred doubloons, to whoever shall capture the said senior Jose Dilgaro Morian, ranchoero, dead or alive, or give to this government, or the nearest authorities, accurate knowledge of his retreat or whereabouts."

[Signed] GEN. M. ALMONTE, President of Mexico.

The ranchoero broke forth with a loud laugh, as he concluded reading the pronouncement, and resumed his seat.

"So, so," he cried, the general is rewarding me for the assistance I gave him in helping him into power. But such is the ingratitude of rulers. I shall be in Mexico within a week, and in General Almonte's council chamber! There, Armenda, is a good chance for you to become wealthy."

"What by betraying you, señor?"

"Yes, 'tis easy."

"By the bright sword you wear, I would not do it, if you would let me tie you without resistance," replied the bourgeoisie.

"True as steel, Armenda," exclaimed the ranchoero, "By St. Mark! I shall have to enlist you yet!"

The conversation was here arrested by a new comer, who rode up in front of the rancho, upon a jet black steed, of the Mustang breed. The stranger was about the same figure in height and form as the ranchoero, but of an American cast of features, and dressed in the plain attire of an American citizen. There was a peculiar traveled air about him, for one so young—he did not appear to be more than five in twenty, and his clear blue eyes moved with a calm steady glance, which betokened entire self-possession.

On entering the room, he glanced round with a familiar air, and carelessly throwing his travelling bag upon the table, he said, as though unconscious of the curious gaze of those present:

"There, Armenda, is a parcel of but little value, but you will oblige me by taking care of it."

"Certainly, señor," said the bar maid, with a polite courtesy, but a sly glance at the ranchoero.

"And you may send some one in half an hour to take care of my horse; for the present, he will do very well where he is until he cools off."

"Yes, señor."

The stranger then took another glance round the room, and his gaze at last rested upon the pronouncement. Crossing the room with a careless air, he read it, and then, with the greatest nonchalance, dropped in a chair near the ranchoero, and called for a bottle of wine.

"Have you travelled far, señor?" asked the ranchoero, after eyeing him for some moments.

"Not very," was the laconic reply, as he poured out the wine which the girl had brought.

"From Point Isabel?"

"Not to day," was the reply, as the stranger carelessly drank.

"Bound to Matamoros, I guess?" persisted the ranchoero, not a little piqued at the imperturbable calmness of the stranger.

"Perhaps," replied the traveller, unmoved.

"Come, señor, you are unscorable," said the ranchoero, assuming a bravado air.—"That is ungenerous, and sometimes dangerous in these troublous times. I'll join you in a social glass," and he extended his hand toward the stranger's bottle.

"Not of my wine," said the traveller.—"Coolly picking up the bottle, and pouring out another glass, he sat it out of the ranchoero's reach, and drank."

"Death and curses!" cried the ranchoero laying his hand upon the hilt of his sword, "do you mean to insult me, señor?"

The stranger raised his calm blue eyes at the bandit chief, with a steady gaze, and said:

"No!"

"Then why did you not drink with me?" he cried, choleric with rage.

"Because I don't choose!" replied the stranger calmly; "I am a traveller, and don't choose to make every man I meet in a public rancho my friend; and they are wise who will permit me to do it unmolested."

"But, by St. Jago! I am one of those who claim the privilege of intruding upon your rules," cried the chief.

"I have no doubt," said the stranger, unmoved. "But before you do it, you had better consider the results. I might make it a profitable job to defend my rights." The stranger gave a quick glance around the room.

The five ranchoeros, each had his hands upon their knives, and were bending forward as though ready to spring upon him. The rest were gazing idly on; they were used to such scenes.

"What mean you, señor, by making it a profitable job?" said the ranchoero, in a suspicious tone. "Do you not see those fellows there? They are my followers, and even should the rest be neutral, we are six to one!"

"I see," said the stranger, his features assuming a sterner calmness. "And yet I might get that five hundred doubloons which General Almonte has offered for your head!"

"You know me then?" cried the ranchoero starting to his feet.

"Yes," thundered the stranger spring-

ing over the table, into a corner, next to the bar.

"Down with him! Stand back, Capitano, we'll finish him!" cried the five ranchoeros, as they sprang to ward him.

"Back!" thundered the stranger, his eyes flashing fire, as he drew from his bosom a pistol the curious formation of which made the Mexican pause.

"Hold!" cried the ranchoero, with a gesture of command to his men. "Tell me, señor, how you come to know me, and whether we have met before."

"We have!" said the traveller.

"At Alamo!"

"Do you remember Jasper Cardeas, your rival for the standard of the Rangers?"

"Yes, variel, I do?" cried the ranchoero, as the blood swelled the tendons of his features. "You tore them from my hands but I will now have my revenge." And drawing his sabre he sprang towards the stranger.

There was a quick flash, a report and the captain of the ranchoeros fell to the floor. The rest now darted toward him, but ere they could reach him, there were four more quick reports, and four more of the accused band staggered reeled and fell. The other passed in bewilderment, at this strange result, and the rest of the company covered in the corners as tho' Satan himself had made a sudden entrance in the room. The remaining bandit rallied his courage however, when a ball went singing through his heart! He fell dead.

"What—what accursed weapon is that?" gasped the ranchoero chief, as he struggled upon his elbow, and glared upon the stranger with his death glaring eyes.

The stranger picked up his traveling bag, and moved toward the door as he replied:

"Only a new Yankee invention, Señor Morian. When I get to Mexico, I shall claim that five hundred doubloons of General Almonte! Farewell!"

"Curses, curses upon your infernal machine!" The curses died on his lips, and the last sound which he heard, was the clattering of the ranger's horse's feet upon the road as he galloped away toward Matamoros.

It is needless to say that the mail was not robbed that night, and the pretty Matani never visited the retreat of the ranchoero. These were avoided by a Texan ranger's courage, and one of Colli's six barreled revolvers—the first that had ever been in Mexico.—*New York Mercury.*

## HOW OUR PAPER IS MADE.

Has the reader ever felt any curiosity as to the manufacture of the paper which he holds in his hand? If so, let us try and elucidate a few points. Imagine, then, huge piles of rags, which have been collected together from different sections of the country, and which now repose on the floor of some mill, waiting to be thrown into the cutting machine. From this they emerge in slips of about six inches in length. These are passed through an apparatus which cleans them of dirt, and they are then thrown into stands or vats, a strong lye is placed upon them, and the whole is then boiled by steam for about twelve hours, in order to soften the texture and loosen the coloring. From there they are put into the washer. After having become thoroughly cleansed and fibrous, they are bleached until free of all coloring, and now present the appearance of pure white cotton, which has been